

New AETC commander sets priorities

Basic training, recruiting, education, technical training and flying are order of business

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RANDOLPH AFB, Texas (AFNS) – Assuming responsibility for more than 57,000 men and women may seem an overwhelming task for some, but not for Gen. Lloyd W. “Fig” Newton. The new Air Education and Training Command commander spoke enthusiastically about his priorities for the command during a recent interview.

“There’s no question about it; we have to continue to place a lot of emphasis on quality of life for our people, such as housing,” said Newton about the challenge to address quality-of-life concerns. “We also have to look very closely at our (operations) tempo and ensure it is in balance with our goal of 120 days of temporary duty assignment per year per individual. We have to look at those unique specialties which require some of our people to exceed that goal, and evaluate each of these situations as they occur. Then we need to make sure people understand the reasons why they are deployed so often.

“It is very important that we ensure that we continue to create an environment that is appropriate for people to work—both physically as well as socially,” Newton added. “The treatment of our people around the command must be the number-one priority for all commanders in AETC. As it’s been said so many times before, ‘without people, we can not get the mission accomplished.’ It doesn’t make any difference how sophisticated or capable the equipment may be; you still need top-notch personnel to operate it.”

“We must ensure we get the maximum capability out of all our people. If we do not, we’re going to fall short of the command’s objective of providing well-trained men and women for the Air Force. This is the emphasis from the chief (of staff) and secretary (of the Air Force), and it will certainly be my emphasis as well. People first in all that we do.”

Newton is determined to learn



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as much about every facet of AETC as quickly as possible.

“I want to initially focus on the training side of the business, with basic military training and recruiting as my two top priorities, followed by education, tech training and then flying training,” said Newton a command pilot with more than 4,000 flying hours. “The reason I put them in that order is because I feel I know more about the flying training part of the business than the other areas. It doesn’t mean flying training is any less important, but I will understand that part of the mission a lot faster.”

The Ridgeland, S.C., native foresees the command continuing to work outsourcing and privatization hard, but he emphasizes the importance of doing it right.

“There are probably many things, at first glance, that would appear to be absolutely right to outsource or privatize; but they actually may be the wrong things. Therefore, we need good tools for analysis of each area to ensure we keep ‘in-house’ those functions that should be kept.”

Developing the right tools to measure O&P may not be easy, according to Newton, who led the initial air staff movement during his previous assignment as Air Force assistant vice chief of staff. “It’s important to realize that once you move a process outside of the command—to the private sector—it will be very difficult to reverse that action,” said the general. “Therefore, I will depend on my

commanders in the field to ensure that we privatize the right things.

“AETC is a command that the Air Force and I are particularly proud of because of your progress in O&P,” added Newton. “AETC has done a lot of great work in this area. Vance AFB, (Okla.), has been a true success story. We want to look for opportunities for other successes. If the opportunities are there, we should take advantage of them and ensure our Air Force remains the world’s greatest Air Force.”

As we continue to deal with changes, mentoring becomes more important, Newton stressed.

“Changes cause turmoil in the minds of our people, and they need to have someone to go to when they have questions. That translates to a mentor; someone who understands the Air Force

and what we are trying to accomplish,” he added. “Mentors should provide the guidance our young people need for a successful career and way of life, whether it’s in the Air Force or back in the civilian community. We need them to be good productive citizens no matter where they are.

“Mentoring also translates back into leadership,” he added. “You don’t have to be assigned to a leadership position to be a leader. There are lots of leaders out there at various levels throughout the rank structure. The senior leadership needs to emphasize to the rest of the force that we all need to take on the responsibility for caring for each other. Our people need to feel they are in an environment where they have an opportunity to turn to someone to turn to if a problem arises.”

Newton concluded, “It’s a distinct honor and privilege for me to have the opportunity to be the commander of ‘The First Command.’

“The First Command’ is important because it lays the foundation for our people to serve in the Air Force and the nation. I’m pleased to have the opportunity to help shape the future Air Force leaders. Elouise and I look forward to meeting and working with the people in the command, and getting to know the community leaders where our training bases are located. We hope to visit you soon.”

Can I destroy copies of my tax return after one year?

The IRS has a more than one-year lag time in auditing returns. Also, people may discover a mistake in a prior year’s return and need to amend it. People should keep a copy of their tax return, worksheets, W-2s and 1099s, and records of all items appearing on the return until the statute of limitations runs out for that return. The statute of limitations for a return is usually three years from the date the return was due or filed, or two years from the date the tax was paid, whichever is later. Some records, however, such as real estate documents, and brokerage statements on stock transactions, should be maintained until people dispose of the property. Also keep records on all contributions to nondeductible IRAs until all IRA funds are withdrawn. People who have lost or destroyed a copy of a prior year’s tax return can get a copy by filing Form 4506, Request for Copy of Tax Return, along with the required fee to the IRS service center where the return was filed.

Tax tip